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Renard Communications Corp.
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April 25, 1998

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Magalie Roman Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, Rm. 222
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Comments On Petition for Rulemaking
RM No. 9242
"Proposal for Creation of the Low Power FM (LPFM) Broadcast Service"

Dear Ms. Salas,

On behalf of Renard Communications Corp., enclosed please find an original and nine (9) copies of comments on the above-captioned proceeding regarding a proposed Low Power FM (LPFM) Broadcast Service.

If there are any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

Craig L. Fox

Craig L. Fox
President

Encs.

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Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, DC 20554

In the Matter of	)	
	)	RM No. 9242
Proposal for Creation of the Low Power FM (LPFM) Broadcast Service	)	

To: The Commission

COMMENTS ON PETITION FOR RULEMAKING

Renard Communications Corp. ("Renard") hereby submits comments on the above captioned matter. Although a noble idea, the proposal of J. Rodger Skinner, Jr. ("Skinner") should not be adopted. The spectrum available in the FM band would not be able to handle the increased demand for space in any efficient manner and it would be disruptive to the development of new full-service FM stations and translators.

1. The adoption of Docket 84-231 (addition of 684 new FM allotments) and Section 73.215 (short-spaced directional FM stations) of the Commission's rules already has demonstrated a strain on available spectrum. Fortunately for broadcasters who are disadvantaged due to terrain limitations, there is the ability for the use of translators to provide service to the public from stations that would otherwise not be able to be received. Further, the Commission has only recently enabled increased power for translators to provide more efficient service. In most parts of the country, spectrum space simply does not exist for additional service.

2. Skinner's proposal, however, seeks to eliminate certain protection requirements specifically that being second and third adjacent channel protection to full-service stations

for a new service to be called LPFM. Although there have been considerable improvements to FM receivers over the years, elimination of second and third adjacent channel protections to full-service stations for the purpose of establishing an LPFM service is absurd.

3. If the Commission were to consider eliminating second and third channel protections, it would most certainly go to the ability for creating new regular full-service stations first. This alone would be a disaster in that the number of FM stations in the entire country would practically double as there would be new stations in between all existing stations.

4. Furthermore, any consideration of making additional frequencies available by elimination of second and third channel protection should first be afforded to existing full-service stations wishing to relocate, additional badly needed translators and AM stations. AM stations, which have been increasingly struggling to survive for the past two decades are in much dire need for FM service than to create more stations at this point in time. The fact that only approximately 88 AM stations nationwide were made eligible for the expanded band has left the rest of the thousands of them helpless for improvement so they should be first in line for use of the FM band.

5. Skinner did not address any priorities in licensing for LPFM. That is to say, is it his intention that LPFM-1 stations can bump translators and what is to keep an LPFM-2 station from adding one watt to become an LPFM-1 and therefore jeopardize the status and existence of translators or other LPFM-2 stations that may exist.

6. The analogy of LPFM to LPTV as a reason or a way to exist does not hold much merit. LPTV came to exist because there was vast part of the spectrum that was not being used. Because full-service television stations are strictly laid out by one class of mileage separations, there were large geographic areas of spectrum that could not be used by full-service stations. With LPTV being able to receive interference, but not cause it and because many of the spacing taboos were not necessary for LPTV, it was able to weave its way in and around the existence of full-service stations and develop into a small industry. Conversely, vast unused space does not exist in the FM band and development of an LPFM service would squeeze the spectrum so tight that there would literally be no room for existing translator service to continue or for any new translator service.

7. It must not be forgotten that at one time 10 watt Class D stations existed as a regular class of service. These stations had minimal broadcasting schedules and underutilized the non-commercial part of the FM band. They were determined to be inefficient and either had to upgrade to 100 watts minimum or be relocated to the commercial band. The existence of these few remaining stations is still an annoyance. They frequently overmodulate, drift, and provide only a limited service. Yet, despite their shortcomings, they provide all of the required interference protections from co-channel to third adjacent. For this class of station alone, it is a burden in trying to find new frequencies for them just to remain in existence. An increased burden from LPFM would be a nightmare.

8. The question of whether to forego protection to existing full-service stations from second or third channel spacings must be looked at from several different

perspectives. Grandfathered stations that are short-spaced on second or third adjacents must be looked at from the standpoint that as full-service stations they are establishing what is known as "replacement service." In television, for example, on first adjacent channels at minimum spacings, the Grade B contour is not protected from interference by another full-service station and that due to the minimum spacings a particular station's Grade B contour may be impaired to some extent. This is allowed because the offending station is providing a replacement service more or less equal in quality as a transmission service for the public. However, LPTV stations must fully protect a full-service station's Grade B contour. In the case of FM, it makes no sense that a station of a sub-class, as that of an LPFM, should be allowed to cause second and third adjacent channel interference when full-service stations do not cause it to each other except in the limited circumstances of grandfathered stations. Just because these stations exist is not a reason to create more. It must also be noted that once a short-spacing exists with a grandfathered station for a second or third adjacent channel, the ability in moving a site freely does not exacerbate interference, because as the stations move closer together, the interference area is reduced due to the increased desired to undesired ratio.

9. However, do not form the opinion that the writer is opposed to elimination of second and third channel spacing requirements, or just the third as a first step, only that if one or both are eliminated the opinion on the priority of the use of the newly created useable spectrum is a far cry different from Skinner. Any newly created LPFM service could rank no higher than fourth on a list of priorities. First, would be for full-service stations who are boxed in at disadvantaged transmitter sites being able to relocate so long

as they still provide their community of license with the required minimum signal. Second, would be to foster further development of "fill-in" translators by full-service stations who have terrain problems within their predicted service areas, third would be for AM stations to use FM translators to provide better service either because of daytime only service, limited interference free nighttime service areas or because ever-increasing man-made interference especially from computers, light dimmers, color television sets, VCR's, fluorescent or RF lighting, neon signs and power line leakage has gotten beyond the point of no return.

10. Thus, any new service for LPFM would have to be a "tertiary" service behind that of primary full-service stations, and secondary service of translators whether used traditionally for FM stations or as supplements for AM stations. Any new FM originating service other than those facilities used as "fill-in" translators for FM or AM stations should also be limited to 250 watts ERP at 100 meters (30 meters in Zone 1 and 1A) height above average terrain as translators presently are. It is also noted that the most recent Canadian agreement provides for a new FM class of stations known as Class A1 which are 250 watts ERP with a maximum HAAT of 100 meters.

11. It is believed that very few geographic areas would actually have additional spectrum available for a meaningful implementation of an originating LPFM service at the power levels proposed by Skinner and thus it is better being reserved for use only for translators.

Respectfully submitted,

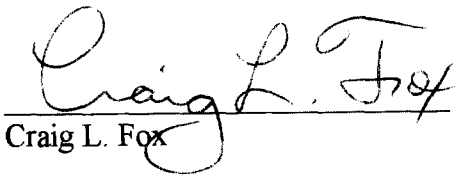
Craig L. Fox
President
Renard Communications Corp.
4853 Manor Hill Dr.
Syracuse, NY 13215-1336

April 25, 1998

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Craig L. Fox, hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing "Comments On Petition for Rulemaking" was sent on this 25th day of April, 1998, via first-class United States mail, postage pre-paid, to the following:

TRA Communications Consultants, Inc.
6431 NW 65th Terrace
Pompano Beach, FL 33067-1546



Craig L. Fox